

## 10<sup>th</sup> SPC Heads of Fisheries Meeting

Noumea, New Caledonia, 14–17 March 2017

### Information Paper 13

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## Minutes of the Session on the introduction of new projects starting in 2017 for country input

Noumea, Friday 17 March 2017

The session was officially opened and chaired by Mr. Moses Amos, Director, FAME, SPC.

### MFAT Coastal Fisheries Governance Project & Aquaculture Development Project (SPC CFP)

1. Two sister projects developed from the outcomes of HOF9 and funded by New Zealand's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) have started operations in the second half of 2016 – the Coastal Fisheries Governance Project “Improving fisheries food security and sustainable livelihoods for Pacific Island communities” and the Sustainable Pacific Aquaculture Development Project; both projects were presented for country input to their respective work planning.
2. The Coastal Fisheries Governance Project extends over 5 years with a budget of over NZD \$7.3 million and focuses mainly on the development of legislation, policy and management plans and on Monitoring, Control, Surveillance and Enforcement (MCS&E) for coastal fisheries and aquaculture, both at national and subnational level. The project includes a capacity building and awareness raising component as well as a number of attachment and junior professional positions.
3. The countries thanked MFAT and SPC for their efforts and welcomed the expertise provided under the project, noting that assistance in legal and MCS&E matters was eagerly awaited in the coastal fisheries sector. Several countries are in the process of revising their fisheries legislation, and the need for assistance is arising both at national and sub-national level. Many

countries are also currently preparing or adopting management plans as well as regulations on size limits, but reliable scientific data is often lacking. It was suggested that SPC set up a reference database with available information on the minimum size of species to support the adoption of sound regulations and management measures.

4. A number of countries anticipated requests for assistance to review their coastal fisheries legislation, to develop coastal fisheries and aquaculture policies, to prepare management plans for specific species, and to receive training in MCS&E and gender issues. With regard to professional attachments under the project, it was suggested that a work programme be agreed with the country beforehand to allow lending institutions to reintegrate their staff at the end of the training experience.
5. The Aquaculture Development Project extends over 5 years with a budget of NZD \$4.9 million and focuses mainly on institutional strengthening and planning in the field of aquatic biosecurity, mentoring of aquaculture business enterprises, and capacity development and technology transfer in feed, seed and brood stock management. The project will also provide policy and legislative assistance through the Coastal Fisheries Governance Project team.
6. Countries thanked the donor and SPC for the timeliness of the project, and noted that addressing biosecurity issues – including the risks related to ballast waters – is crucial for the upscaling of aquaculture activities. They supported the training workshops to be carried out under the project and suggested that the project is a great opportunity for country exchanges within the region. It was suggested that lead farmers be identified to allow countries to share experiences and lessons learnt. At the sub-regional level, the project should feed into the Micronesian Association for Sustainable Aquaculture (MASA) Network.
7. Some of the issues facing aquaculture development that were raised by the heads of fisheries include market access, hatchery design, feed production, aquaculture regulations and information on investors. In this latter regard, it was suggested that SPC set up a repository of information on aquaculture companies interested in investing in the Pacific to allow countries to share information on investors and assess their legitimacy.

### **DFAT PACFish II Project in 3 countries (WorldFish/ANCORS)**

8. Funded by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), PACFish II is the second phase of the project titled ‘Strengthening and scaling community-based approaches to Pacific coastal fisheries management in support of the New Song’. PACFish II covers 3 countries, namely Kiribati, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. It is due to start in mid-2017 and will run for 4 years with an overall budget of AUD \$7.4 million. The project aims at strengthening institutions, policy and legislation related with Community-Based Fisheries Management (CBFM) in collaboration with SPC and the Locally-Managed Marine Areas (LMMA) Network and at supporting national Fish Aggregating Device (FAD) programmes. It is also involved in tilapia farming, gender and youth aspects and fish consumption issues.
9. Countries welcomed the project and the participating countries acknowledged the excellent work carried out during the previous phase. The proposal for an annual technical meeting on coastal fisheries where countries can share experience and present lessons learnt was reiterated as a possible activity under the project. Some countries showed particular interest in the impact assessment of FADs. Countries also highlighted the need to upscale activities

while maintaining them at community level, as well as the efforts made by countries to realign communities with national priorities.

## EDF 11 Update for Pacific ACP and OCT (SPC & FFA)

10. Discussions on the Pacific-European Union Marine Partnership Programme (PEUMP), to be funded under the 11<sup>th</sup> European Development Fund (EDF11), started over 2 years ago. The programme has a broad objective aiming at promoting ocean governance in 15 Pacific ACP States, including Timor Leste, in collaboration with numerous partners, namely SPC, FFA, PIFS, SPREP, USP, WWF, IUCN, LMMA and others. FFA is the lead agency for project formulation, SPC will be the lead agency for project management and PIFS will be the regional authorising officer. Support from and engagement of all countries through national authorising officers and through the Ministries of Fisheries and Conservation is crucial for effective delivery at local level.
11. The contract should be signed before the end of 2017, with a budget of 45 million Euro (35 million from the EU and 10 million from the Kingdom of Sweden), of which around 13 million Euro are dedicated to the coastal fisheries management component and 4.5 million Euro to the oceanic fisheries science component. Discussions amongst the different implementing partners and the EU to finalise the budget will start shortly. The programme focuses on 6 result areas: (i) scientific advice for management of the oceanic fishery (OFF); (ii) economic development of national tuna industries (FFA & PITIA); (iii) coastal fisheries management including socioeconomic studies, community-based ecosystem approach to fisheries management (CEAFM), (SPC & LMMA), with legislative reforms and MCS&E covered under the MFAT project; (iv) enhanced MCS to control IUU fishing including blue boats (FFA & WWF); (v) ecosystem management and biodiversity conservation (SPREP & IUCN); and (vi) relevant tertiary training (USP including TVET).
12. In parallel, a programme is being developed under the EDF11 for Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs), of which New Caledonia is the regional coordinator. The OCT programme pursues two main objectives: the first one focuses on the primary sector and climate change, agriculture, marine resources, aquaculture and Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) that has strong ties with the PEUMP for the Pacific ACP States; the second objective addresses issues related to biodiversity, water resources, ecosystem services, invasive species and integrated management of river basins. The programme has a budget of 36 million Euro over 3 years.
13. Countries thanked the donor for strengthening the CROP agencies but recommended that due attention be paid to ensure resources and benefits filter down at national level. Partnerships with active NGOs in the region is essential in this regard, and a regional steering committee will be held every year with all partners, including representatives from the 15 countries for the adoption of a yearly work plan reflecting the actual needs of the countries. HOF will have to work closely with national authorising officers to make sure that fisheries priorities are taken into account in the implementation of the programme. Finally, countries underscored the need for coordination between donors (i.e. Australia, New Zealand and the EU) to ensure the complementarity of interventions and activities, particularly in the fields of marine spatial planning, maritime delimitations and MCS training.

### **MFAT Harvesting Strategy Project (SCP OFP)**

14. The key drivers for the proposed Harvesting Strategy Project are the regional Roadmap for Sustainable Pacific Fisheries and related Report Cards. The project aims at supporting the implementation of harvest strategies within the WCPO, including WCPFC Conservation and Management Measure 2014-06 on establishing a harvest strategy for key fisheries and stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean and the work plan for adoption of harvest strategies. It will also support the capacity building of members in the implementation of these approaches and the uptake of results. The project proposal is currently being reviewed by MFAT and is likely to be approved by April 2017 for a duration of 5 years.
15. Countries appreciated the proposed methodology featuring a staged approach for the preparation and adoption of harvest control rules as a member-driven exercise involving bilateral consultations, and capacity building to support to the wider WCPFC membership. The project is viewed as a tool to build country positions and to engage fishing nations through the WCPFC.

### **MFAT Tokelau Arrangement Project (FFA)**

16. The New Zealand-funded project – ‘Improving South Pacific Tuna Longline Policy and Management’ – is a collaboration between FFA and SPC OFP, and will commence this month. It has a budget of NZD \$7 million, and a duration of 5 years provided that annual milestones are achieved. The project responds to the need for improved regional collaboration to achieve more effective management of the South Pacific longline fishery, which targets mainly albacore tuna. The FFA presentation noted that regional collaboration through the implementation of the PNA purse-seine Vessel Days Management Scheme appears to have stabilised the status of the skipjack stock, but the South Pacific albacore stock continues to decline under current management measures. This project will support the research and development needed to implement a regional management scheme for the South Pacific albacore stock arising from the Tokelau Arrangement. It also provides support to individual TKA Participants in the strengthening of longline management measures at the national level, particularly the need for electronic catch reporting. Implementation of this subregional management scheme will also improve the requirement for compatibility of conservation and management measures for high seas fisheries on the shared albacore stock, as required by international law and the WCPFC Convention.

### **Concept Note for GCF/GEF 7 – Coastal Fisheries (FAO & SPC)**

17. Although FAO SAP and SPC have worked closely on fisheries for many years, SPC and FAO seek to enhance such collaboration. Opportunities for enhanced collaboration could arise through global funding sources such as the Global Environmental Fund (GEF) and the Green Climate Fund (GCF). In this regard, and noting that food production across PICs needs to increase by 50% in order to meet dietary needs of growing populations, FAO and SPC are willing to prepare a concept note. The project may be multi-country or fully regional, and country input will be sought to ensure relevance of its design. National Fisheries offices would need to inform the National Focal Points/National Designated Authorities that such work was in progress to ensure funds were available. The extensive FAO in-country stakeholder

consultations that took place as part of the 2018-2021 FAO Multi country programme Framework might provide useful insight as to the priority areas of work.

18. Countries unanimously supported the development of a concept note, bearing in mind that they should be the ultimate beneficiaries and partners of such a project and that it should reflect their national priorities and they have input to the process. The appropriateness of funding from GEF or GCF sources would become clearer as the concept note logframe took shape.
19. It was suggested that funds could be used to extend support for current activities and address gaps in existing projects. Ideas that came out from HOF discussions include good governance, coastal MCS, effective management of coastal resources, coastal communities' resilience, the development of fishing technology, equitable access to resources and distribution of resources, institutional coordination and strengthening, and food gap reduction. Other areas that should be taken into consideration are the creation of a data repository, initiatives on data harmonization, south-south cooperation for aquaculture exchange, and the establishment of an annual meeting on coastal fisheries.
20. The session was closed echoing the importance of fisheries – oceanic and coastal, underscoring FAME's role to give services that address the priorities of SPC member countries, and noting the importance of strengthening collaboration with the Heads of Fisheries.